

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 201014Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3559
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY SANA
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ADDIS ABABA 2337

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, US, ET, SO, SU, XW
SUBJ: POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING ON HORN OF AFRICA

REF: A. STATE 85332, B. STATE 85805

1. I CONCUR WHOLEHEARTEDLY WITH GENERAL THRUST OF PRC
DECISION REPORTED REFTEL (A), THAT WE SHOULD NOT PULL OUT
OF ETHIOPIA, BUT MUCH OF REMAINDER PARA 1.A. AND SUCCEEDING
SUB-PARAS RAISE AS MANY QUESTIONS IN OUR MINDS AS IT ANSWERS.

2. CHIEF AMONG THESE IS OBVIOUS INTENT TO MOVE AWAY FROM
ETHIOPIA IN FAVOR OF STRONGER TIES WITH SUDAN AND POSSIBLY
SOMALIA. I CERTAINLY HAVE NO QUARREL WITH IDEA OF STRENGTHEN-
ING OUR TIES WITH EITHER COUNTRY, BUT I TRUST THAT FULL
CONSIDERATION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO IMPACT OF OUR INTENTIONS
ON WHAT'S LEFT OF USG/ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS,
PARTICULARLY IF WE MOVE IN THE DIRECTION OF MILITARY

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ASSISTANCE. ON ONE HAND WE WILL BE SIGNALLING ETHIOPIANS
THAT DESPITE OUR LONG-STANDING POSITION TOWARD THEM OF
BEING WILLING TO SUPPLY MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR LEGITIMATE
SELF-DEFENSE AND TO MAINTAIN SOME KIND OF MILITARY
BALANCE IN HORN, WE ARE NOW ABANDONING THAT STANCE VIS-A-
VIS ETHIOPIA, BUT AT SAME TIME TELLING SOMALIS THAT WE WILLING
EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES OF SATISFYING THEIR LEGITIMATE

NEEDS (PARA 3 REFTEL B). WE ALSO OF COURSE WILL BE INDICATING TO ETHIOPIANS THAT DESPITE EARLIER AGREEMENTS TO PROVIDE SUCH EQUIPMENT AS F-5E'S, TANKS, TANK AMMO AND APC'S, ETC., OUR WORD ISN'T WORTH VERY MUCH. FINALLY, RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY, WE SHALL BE SAYING TO ETHIOPIANS THAT WE ARE IN FACT THE "IMPERIALISTS WHO ARE BACKING NEIGHBORING REACTIONARY COUNTRIES," A THEME THAT, AS DEPT AWARE, HAS GAINED INCREASING PROMINENCE IN EPMG SPEECHES AND PROPAGANDA OF LATE. IN CASE OF SOMALIA, THEME WILL BE TRANSLATED INTO SUPPORT FOR SOMALI IRREDENTISM IN OGADEN AND PERHAPS DJIBOUTI. EFFECT OF ALL OF THIS WILL BE TO REDUCE EVEN FURTHER OUR OWN ABILITY TO ENCOURAGE NATIONALIST TENDENCIES WITHIN EPMG AND DRIVE THEM FURTHER ALONG SOCIALIST TRAIL.

3. RE SUDAN, WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE MILITARY ASSISTANCE DIRECTLY AT THIS TIME WILL BE PROOF POSITIVE OF WHAT ETHIOPIANS ARE ALREADY SAYING, I.E., WE ARE INDEED SUPPORTING SUDANESE IN THEIR CURRENT CONTRETEMPS WITH ETHIOPIANS AND IN PROCESS, OF COURSE, THAT WHATEVER WE SAY, WE ARE ENCOURAGING SUDANESE AND OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES IN THEIR SUPPORT FOR AN INDEPENDENT ERITREA AND FOR OTHER DISSIDENT GROUPS, PARTICULARLY EDU.

4. PARA 4 REFTEL (B) STATES THAT OUR POLICY RE U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE IN HORN IS EVEN-HANDED. THRUST OF REFTEL (A) DOES NOT SEEM TO BEAR STATEMENT OUT. WHILE WE ARE PREPARING TO AID SUDAN MILITARILY AND EXPLORING POSSIBILITIES OF HELPING SOMALIA, WE ARE
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DENYING ETHIOPIA WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY AGREED TO PROVIDE THEM, SAYING IN EFFECT THAT NOT ONLY ARE THEY NOT LIKELY TO GET WHAT WE'VE ALREADY AGREED UPON, THEY IN TIME WON'T BE ABLE TO SHOOT WHAT WE'VE ALREADY PROVIDED UNLESS THEY CAN FIND WHAT'S NECESSARY ELSEWHERE. IN PROCESS WE WILL BE OVSERVED TO HAVE OPTED FOR OTHER SIDE OF FENCE RE TWO, POSSIBLY THREE, PROBLEMS THAT REALLY MATTER TO ETHIOPIA: ERITREA, OGADEN AND DJIBOUTI. WE SHALL ALSO HAVE CONFIRMED LONG-HELD SUSPICIONS OF THOSE IN DIRG WHO HAVE BEEN SAYING THAT WE NEVER REALLY HAVE BEEN COMFORTABLE WITH ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION, NOT TO MENTION SUSPICION THAT WE HAVE ALL THIS TIME BEEN MOVING TO UNDERMINE IT (READ CIA).

5. CONSEQUENCES OF ALL THIS HERE ARE UNPREDICTABLE, BUT THEY MOST LIKELY WILL NOT BE PLEASANT. AS IT BECOMES MORE AND MORE APPARENT THAT WE DELAYING ON MILITARY EQUIPMENT OF IMPORTANCE TO ETHIOPIA, WHILE AT SAME TIME MAKING MOVES IN DIRECTION OF STRENGTHENING

OUR RELATIONS (INCLUDING MILITARILY) WITH ETHIOPIA'S TWO PRINCIPAL ENEMIES, WE CAN EXPECT AS MINIMUM INCREASED ANTI-U.S., ANTI-CIA PROPAGANDA BOTH IN TERMS OF VOLUME AND INTENSITY, A PROCESS WHICH HAS PROBABLY ALREADY BEGUN. WHETHER THIS WILL IN TURN LEAD TO FURTHER STEPS, I CANNOT YET TELL, BUT OF COURSE POSSIBILITY IS THERE. THERE REAL RISK THAT LONGER WE DELAY, THE GREATER THE ULTIMATE REACTION. ON OTHER THAND, IT POSSIBLY THAT ETHIOPIANS HAVE ALREADY READ US LOUD AND CLEAR AND THEIR CURRENT SCRAMBLE TO OBTAIN WEAPONS FROM OTHER SOURCES PLUS THEIR PROPAGANDA IS EVIDENCE OF THIS.

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6. TO TRY TO BLUNT EDGE OF ALL THIS WITH ETHIOPIANS, I URGE CONSIDERATION OF FOLLOWING POSSIBILITIES (I AM ASSUMING THAT LARGE AMMO REQUEST IS COMPREHENDED IN DECISION NOT TO MOVE ON LETHAL WEAPONS):

A. WE TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT DESIRABILITY OF DELAYING ON LETHAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT FOR ETHIOPIA, NOT ONLY IN TERMS OF OUR IMAGE HERE, INCLUDING POSSIBLE SPIN-OFF ON THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY, BUT IN TERMS OF THE PERCEPTION OF OTHERS OF OUR INTENTIONS IN AFRICA VIS-A-VIS SOVIET THRUST (E.G. ANGOLA). IF RECONSIDERATION IS A POSSIBILITY, DEPT MIGHT WISH TO CONSIDER WHETHER WE

MIGHT REQUEST EPMG FOR ITS PART TO GIVE US INDICATION THAT THEY STILL VALUE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, E.G., BY BEING MORE EVEN-HANDED IN THEIR MEDIA AND IN THEIR PUBLIC ADDRESSES.

B. WE MAKE CLEAR ON SUITABLE PUBLIC OCCASIONS

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1) OUR SUPPORT FOR PRINCIPLE OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY WHICH STILL DEAR TO HEARTS OF BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND THAT WE DISSOCIATE OURSELVES ENTIRELY FROM EFFORTS OF ARAB COUNTRIES ON BEHALF OF INDEPENDENT ERITREA. (WE MIGHT ALSO TRY PERSUADING CERTAIN ARAB COUNTRIES THAT AN INDEPENDENT ERITREA WILL NOT SOLVE VERY MANY PROBLEMS. ETHIOPIA IS MOST UNLIKELY TO GIVE UP ON ERITREA, AND REGION COULD REMAIN TROUBLE SPOT FOR YEARS TO COME. INTER ALIA, THERE NO ASSURANCE THAT AN INDEPENDENT ERITREA WOULD NOT ALSO BE LEFTIST, AND IN ANY CASE WOULD BE ECONOMICALLY VULNERABLE AND SUBJECT TO MANIPULATION BY OUTSIDE FORCES.) 2) THAT ANY MILITARY EQUIPMENT FURNISHED EITHER SUDAN OR SOMALIA IS FOR SELF-DEFENSE ONLY AND NOT TO BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE, AND 3) THAT WE FULLY SUPPORT SELF-DETERMINATION AND EVENTUAL INDEPENDENCE OF DJIBOUTI IF THAT IS COURSE CHOSEN AT REFERENDUM (SAID BEFORE, BUT CAN STAND REPEATING).

C. WE CONSIDER DELAYING DELIVERY ACTION ON C-130'S FOR SUDAN AND/OR OTHER MILITARY EQUIPMENT AT LEAST UNTIL WE ARE ALL CLEAR IN OUR MINDS ON FUTURE OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW FACT IT WILL BE MOST DIFFICULT TO ASSURE THAT SUCH EQUIPMENT WILL NOT BE USED IN SUPPORT OF EFFORTS IN ERITREA. IN THIS CONNECTION WE WOULD APPRECIATE CLARIFICATION FROM DEPT OF WHAT IS MEANT BY LETHAL OR NON-LETHAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT. CURRENTLY IN PIPELINE ARE F5E'S, M-60 TANKS, SPECIAL-PURPOSE VEHICLES, VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF AMMO, 1/4, 2 1/2 AND 5-TON VEHICLES, APC'S, TOW MISSILES, LAUNCHERS AND VEHICLES, MRTARS, RECOILLESS RIFLES, AND PATROL BOATS. WHAT IF ANY OF THIS IS NON-LETHAL, AND FURTHER WHAT NOW HAS BECOME OF ASSURANCES WE GAVE EPMG JUST SHORT TIME AGO THAT FMS CREDIT AND CASH SALES WERE STILL AVENUES OPEN TO THEM?

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